



## MAIN STREET

Rich Wandschneider

# A brief history of tourism

As COVID fears decrease, tourism flourishes. In some ways and places, tourism continued right through the worst of times, as second-homeowners retreated to their second homes to wait it out, or as RVers hit the road with their school-age kids, teaching geography and history as they telecommuted with classrooms. RV sales soared, and getting and patching up a used RV became near impossible. Makes sense: Buy your groceries at Door-dash or shop the supermarket Sunday morning early, stock the RV larder and hit the road.

That works for retirees, and for some — students and workers — who can telecommute from anywhere. It didn't help hotels, motels and restaurants accustomed to relying on tourist dollars. And it didn't help essential workers who couldn't get the time off — or didn't have RVs. But things have eased some for the many grocery workers, nurses, box store employees and others who count themselves "middle class."

We've watched it all go by on Main Street in Joseph, wintertime heavy with Idaho and Washington license plates; and now the longer reach, measured by Nevada, Texas, Wisconsin, Carolina, New York and California plates.

This is not all new. There were adventurers who set out for foreign lands in Greek and Roman times — they left graffiti on buildings and monuments, as did the poet Lord Byron; I found his name scratched into an ancient temple in Greece when I "adventured" there in 1966.

One of my favorite book titles is "A Short Walk in the Hindu Kush." Short and steep; Eric Newby set out to climb the mountains of Afghanistan. He and a traveling companion "trained" by climbing hills and visiting pubs in Wales. Newby found a new career, and it wasn't mountain climbing, but travel writing.

Which reminds me that Tom Brosnahan, a Peace Corps volunteer with me in Turkey, tired of teaching English, talked the tourism ministry into his writing "Turkey on \$5 a Day" (this was in 1969; the last, 1993 edition, was "Turkey on \$40 a Day"). Tom has made a career of it, with over 40 travel books and work as a travel planner for people headed to Turkey or France or other foreign lands.

Back at home, Americans have been addicted to travel since the first Europeans who called themselves Americans set out to conquer a continent. Daniel Boone and John Chapman — "Johnny Appleseed" — were never satisfied with the settled, always looking for new places and adventures. French voyagers — "travelers" — paddled and carried the fur trade in their canoes. Thomas Wolfe wrote "You Can't Go Home Again," and in describing a train trip from New York to North Carolina, says that Americans are only "at home" when they are on the move.

Closer yet to home, T. T. Geer, who would become governor of Oregon in 1899, came with friends on a camping trip to Wallowa Lake in 1875, and wrote about it in "Fifty Years in Oregon: Experiences, Observations and Commentaries Upon Men, Measures and Customs in Pioneer Days and Later Times." He took what might be the first photo of the lake and as local history guru David Weaver notes, described a happy trip with La Grande friends — without once mentioning the turmoil going on between settlers and the Indians just two years before Chief Joseph's band of Nez Perce were forced out.

Gov. Geer and Nez Perce eviction were followed by settlement — and tourism. The tour boat Lavina once carried visitors, who came to Joseph by train and the foot of the lake by carriage to the head of the lake. There were boxing matches and a hotel restaurant with cloth napkins there before the Wallowa Lake Lodge was built in 1923. From bookstore days 40 years ago, I remember customers who came every summer to spend the same three weeks at Wallowa Lake, and others from Portland and Tri-Cities who came to summer cabins.

The big change might be the democratization of tourism — once the rite and right of the rich and famous, most Americans now find time and money to be tourists, if only for a rare week or weekend. Our local restaurants are once again full, and the lines at Safeway on Sunday were July 4 and Chief Joseph Days long.

The Nez Perce, who were great travelers themselves, canoeing to Celilo and hunting buffalo on the Plains, are different only in that they are still attached to an original place — which includes these Wallowas. One can imagine the elders thinking: first Lewis and Clark, then the fur traders who named us, followed by missionaries who thought we should all be Presbyterians and settlers and treaty-makers and military who displaced us.

Now the Nez Perce return from Lapwai and Colville and Umatilla to dig roots on the Zumwalt Prairie and sing and drum in the Longhouse in Wallowa, tourists in their own land.

Rich Wandschneider is the director of the Joseph Library of Western History and Culture.

# The dying art of conversation

## OTHER VIEWS

Tom Purcell



Texting is replacing talking as the preferred form of communication? According to a recent survey by OpenMarket, 75% of millennials chose texting over talking when given the choice between being able only to text versus call on their mobile phone.

To be sure, the powerful digital devices almost everyone is carrying around these days have changed the art of human conversation and the way we relate to each other — and not for the better.

When I was in high school many years ago, my mother encouraged me to take a typewriting course, thinking it would benefit me in my working life — and, boy, did it benefit me as a writer.

I don't know how many words I can type per minute, but I'm able to put my thoughts onto the screen rapidly by using almost all my fingers on the keyboard.

The arrangement of the keys on a computer keypad is a legacy of the typewriter, which was invented in the 1870s.

The typewriter eventually replaced messy quill pens and paper pads and greatly improved the efficiency of the businesspeople and writers who learned how to use it.

Now we are abandoning an 1870s invention to revert to text messages that we awkwardly compose with opposable thumbs.

Mark Twain used his typewriter to create long, eloquent sentences in his memoir "Life on the Mississippi," but now humans use texting to b\*\*\*\*\*dize the human language with abbreviated statements that would embarrass a Neanderthal.

"Thag no like text. LOL. :)"

Psychologists say texting can cause "infomania," which Dictionary.com defines as "an obsessive need to constantly check emails, social media, online news, etc."

## "WHEN I WAS GROWING UP, THE TELEPHONE THAT HUNG ON OUR KITCHEN WALL WAS THE SOURCE OF MANY LONG CONVERSATIONS."

Because it causes individuals to "lose concentration as their minds remain fixed in an almost permanent state of readiness to react to technology," infomania can actually cause you to temporarily lose twice as many IQ points as smoking marijuana.

When I was growing up, the telephone that hung on our kitchen wall was the source of many long conversations.

When it rang everyone in the house

# Get some physical activity this summer

## IT'S ABOUT HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Ann Bloom



It's getting warmer outside, and the grass is greener. We are starting to feel like we need a little fresh air and physical activity to carry us forward through the summer months. What to do?

We are extremely fortunate to live in one of the most beautiful places on earth. We are surrounded by mountains, trees, open grassy fields and an abundance of streams. And, of course, the crown jewel — Wallowa Lake. With such beauty all around us, and the fresh air that comes with it, walking seems like a natural for enjoying all that Wallowa County has to offer while getting in that 60 minutes of physical activity that is suggested for most adults every day. And, if you have a dog (or two), everyone will benefit.

There is an etiquette to walking with a dog. Just like people, dogs are all different. Don't assume that just because you love your dog, that other people will feel the same way about him or her.

Carol Vencill, president of the Wallowa County Humane Society and obedience training instructor, offers some tips on how to have an enjoyable and safe walking experience with your canine companion.

"No. 1 — the dog needs to be properly leashed trained. You have to have control of the dog," she said. She added that some dogs are well-trained enough that they are totally controlled by voice alone. She said if people want their dog to have more freedom then they can use a long line of 15-20 feet.

"The leash is for safety reasons." she said, "On a trail, you don't know what

you'll encounter. In our county we have cougar and bear. People need to be mindful of other people and other animals."

She said these include other dogs, horses and even the occasional llama. She said that if you are in an area where there is no one around then you can let your dog off the leash to run around and have a good time.

Also, don't assume that all dogs like each other. If you are walking toward another person with their dog, on a path, for safety's sake, stop several feet away and ask the person if their dog likes other dogs. If the person says yes, then you can slowly approach with your dog. If tails are raised and there is a lot of nose sniffing and tail wagging, it is probably safe to say the dogs like each other or at least are willing to accept one another. This is called the "meet and greet."

Vencill reminds people to, "always get permission and keep it cheerful," when doing the meet and greet.

But what if the meet and greet doesn't go well?

"If one growls, don't pull back," she said. This lifts the dog's front legs off the ground and makes it look bigger to the other dog. She said the proper way is to give a short corrective snap on the leash and pull the dog's head back toward you which gets the focus away from the other dog and back on you. Then move back away from the other dog. As always, offer lots of praise for coming back around to you and, "try not to make a huge deal out of it," she said.

Other mannerly reminders while walking with your four-legged best friend: carry away any droppings. No one likes to clean up after your dog. It is part of being a responsible pet owner.

Another assumption not to make: just because you love your dog and believe it is friendly doesn't mean other people will, too. People you may encounter may not know that about your dog, and could become frightened if they see a dog, even

was excited to pick it up to chat with whomever was calling.

Now, many people prefer to not answer their mobile phones because they don't want to be burdened by conversing with another human being.

Comedian Sebastian Maniscalco talks about how excited his family used to get 20 years ago when the doorbell rang, and how different our reaction is now.

Like Maniscalco's family, my siblings and I loved the sound of the doorbell ringing as friends and neighbors dropped in.

Our mom would break out the coffee cake she saved for visitors. Our home took on a festive spirit as storytelling and laughter broke out.

Now what happens if someone has the gall to ring your doorbell, asks Maniscalco?

People turn off the lights, pull down the blinds and pretend they're not home.

Before email and texting became the default modes of communicating, there were multiple opportunities to greet and converse with our fellow human beings face-to-face.

We'd cheerfully talk about the weather or sports or just "shoot the bull." We'd use facial expressions and hand gestures to emphasize our points. The act of chatting in person was enriching.

Now the art of conversation is dying out because we've reduced it to a form of two-dimensional communication that only requires you to tap a dozen letters on your smartphone.

That's a regrettable trend — or, if you prefer, nothing to "ROTFL" about.

For the text-averse, ROTFL means "roll on the floor laughing."

Tom Purcell is an author and humor columnist for the Pittsburgh Tribune-Review. Email him at Tom@TomPurcell.com.

# Be sure to always have your clubs with you

## TEE TIME

Rochelle Danielson



Golfers: Are you packing up to go on a long vacation or a short weekend getaway? If so, be sure and throw in your clubs.

"But," you say, "why should I make room for my clubs? Out-of-town golf courses look daunting and I may have to pair up with strangers. As much as I enjoy golf, I'm not that good, and I'd make a fool of myself."

Legitimate excuses, but if you wait until you've perfected the game, you'll miss out on the challenges and the beauty other courses present — like Buffalo

Peak's unique link-style fairways, or the Elkhorn Mountain view at Baker City's Quail Ridge.

Sure, there's comfort in having your own foursome, or your own golfing partner, but if you want to play, and you're a single, the clubhouse personnel will set you up with like-minded golfers.

"You can't let other golfers intimidate you," says Jeff Larson, Enterprise class of '79, who took lessons from the late Dick Quinn, but who seldom played once he moved to Barrow, Alaska.

Since retirement two years ago, Jeff claims he has played some amazing golf courses, and also met some interesting people.

Several weeks ago, Larson played with three members of the Dove Valley club in Cave Creek, Arizona.

"I sensed them to be good golfers before they swung. They exuded confidence. I'm shooting in the 90s, a duffer by golf standards, but it didn't bother

me, I was just happy to be out there in the morning air. With these dudes watching, I went to hit my drive that lay off the beaten path. About then, one of them said, 'You're going to damage your club if you hit out of the dirt.' I looked at him, and said, 'I'm not too worried. I have an axe at home that looks better than this club.' Never heard another peep out of him."

The moral of this story: Don't leave your clubs at home. You never know when an out-of-town course will strike your fancy.

On the home front, it's tournament time at Alpine Meadows. Enter to play in the Triple Six Tourney Saturday, June 26. Call clubhouse for more information.

Thank you, too, to Gene Hatch for taking time to weed and edge around the No. 1 Back Tee. Looks good.

Rochelle Danielson of Enterprise loves the game of golf and has golfed for many years at Alpine Meadows.